Morgan-Keith Hopkins Keith
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6

When his pack is attacked by the menacing Chic'tr, the Fenrae pup, Whitepaw, must leave the security of his home in search of help, encountering creatures he knows only through stories and legends...

Art & Story
Vicky Morgan-Keith & Patrick Keith

Penciler of the Chic'tr
David Hopkins

Colors
Patrick Keith

Letters
Comicraft

Ernor Logo
Created with Bryce 3D

Patterings...

Well this is the last time you'll have to plod through one of these for a while. Thanks for taking the time to read these ramblings. If you feel you're missing them, check out the *Patterings* section on our website at the address below if you have some time to kill.

The most fun thing for me while working on this issue (aside from finally getting it finished) in addition to coloring the covers was doing the art for page 26, the last page of the story. It was really hard for me to keep the mystique of the characters while at the same time introducing a taste of things to come. Hopefully between now and the time Rai hatches we will be able to introduce you to the fenrae that Argent is talking about.

The space is just too short to list all of the people who have encouraged us and shared our world. Without making this sound like an Oscar acceptance - thanks to you all. We had no idea how our stuff would be recieved and have been very surprised. The goal at the onset was to tell a story for all ages and to put it out in a timely and professional manner. Our publishing peers have said we accomplished that goal, thank you for including us among your ranks. We have set a standard for ourselves in the marketplace and hopfully we will continue with that trend in future publications.

As we have said so many times, this is not the end of Whitepaw and Hask. There are far more stories of them to tell than I can write about here. Keep an eye out between now and the hatching of Rai for Ernor stories to pop up in other publications. All of the wonderful publishing folks we've met at the conventions assured us that they would like to see more of Whitepaw and Hask, too. See you at the hatching!

Cum air falbh feur gorm!
- P -

Hey all!
I pleaded with Pat for some space to do a little yip-yapping of my own. It's hard to believe this journey is coming to a close...for now. I can hardly believe it's been a year ago since Whitepaw and Hask first started off on their journey together. In that time we have met and communicated with so many wonderful people that have shown us and the world of Ernor so much support. First of all, I would like to thank David Hopkins, our "penciler of the chic'tr for this issue", for doing such wonderful work in such a timely and professional manner. We hope all of you enjoy his meaner, nastier chic'tr as much as we have. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to all of you--readers, retailers, artists, distributors, and publishers--for joining Whitepaw and Hask on their adventures in Ernor. The paths we take in life are so much lighter with good companions. Thanks very much for coming along. We hope to journey again with you soon.
--Vicky

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AND SO, AFTER STAYING BRIEFLY WITH THE ARAKU, WHITEPAW RETURNED TO THE LOWLANDS. HASK AND THE OTHER OCKTONS DELIVERED THE MESSAGE OF THE COMING OF THE ARAKU TO THE GREYCRESTS AT THE VILLAGE OF H'SAK AND THEN RETURNED WITH WHITEPAW TO HIS PACK.
ANY SIGN OF HIM?
NO.

WHITEPAW CERTAINLY HAS BEEN GONE A LONG TIME.
PERHAPS HE GOT LOST.
HE'S PROBABLY DEAD.
I DON'T THINK SO. FROST WOULD HAVE NOTICED THAT.
LOOK! THERE HE IS!
WHITEPAW, WE'RE GLAD YOU'VE RETURNED SAFELY. ARE THESE THE ONLY OTHER FENRAE YOU COULD FIND?
YES, BLACKEAR AND SOFTSILVER ARE ALL THAT WERE LEFT OF THEIR PACK.
WELCOME HOME, SON!
WHAT'S THIS, SOMETHING TO EAT?
I WOULDN'T MAKE HIM MAD IF I WERE YOU.

BUT I HAVE FOUND MORE THAN JUST OTHER FENRAE TO HELP US.
THIS IS HASK, FLASHDUST AND T'NOR.
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE BRINGING THEM TO OUR DEN? NOW MORE OF THEIR KIND WILL COME TO HUNT US!
FOOLISH PUP! YOU'VE BETRAYED OUR PACK! NOW WE MUST FIND ANOTHER DEN AWAY FROM THE LIZARDS TOO!
QUIET! LET THE PUP EXPLAIN!
SILENCE, SHAMAN! WHITEPAW MUST BE PUNISHED!
THUNK
HE SAID LET THE YIP-YAP EXPLAIN.

THEY ARE HERE TO HELP US! HASK AND THE OTHERS HAVE SAVED MY LIFE! THERE WAS NO ONE ELSE WHO COULD COME. THE OTHER PACKS MUST HAVE ALSO BEEN INVADED BY THE CHIC'TR. WE WENT INTO THE MOUNTAINS AND MET THE ARAKU, GREAT BIRDS, WHO WILL BE COMING TO HUNT THE CHIC'TR.
AND THESE LIZARDS ARE COMING TO HELP AS WELL? THEY WON'T BE ENOUGH TO FIGHT THE CHIC'TR.

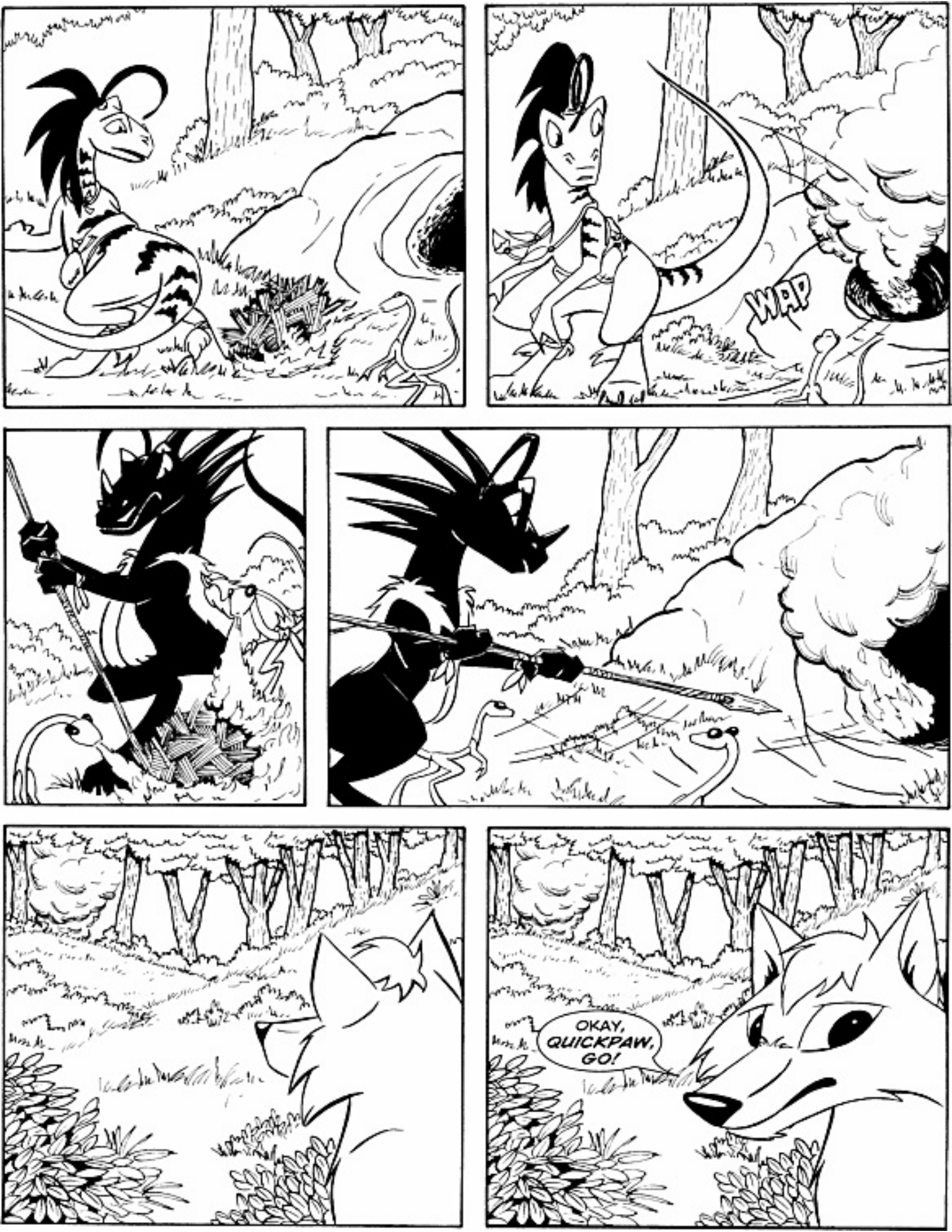
DON'T BE TOO SURE.

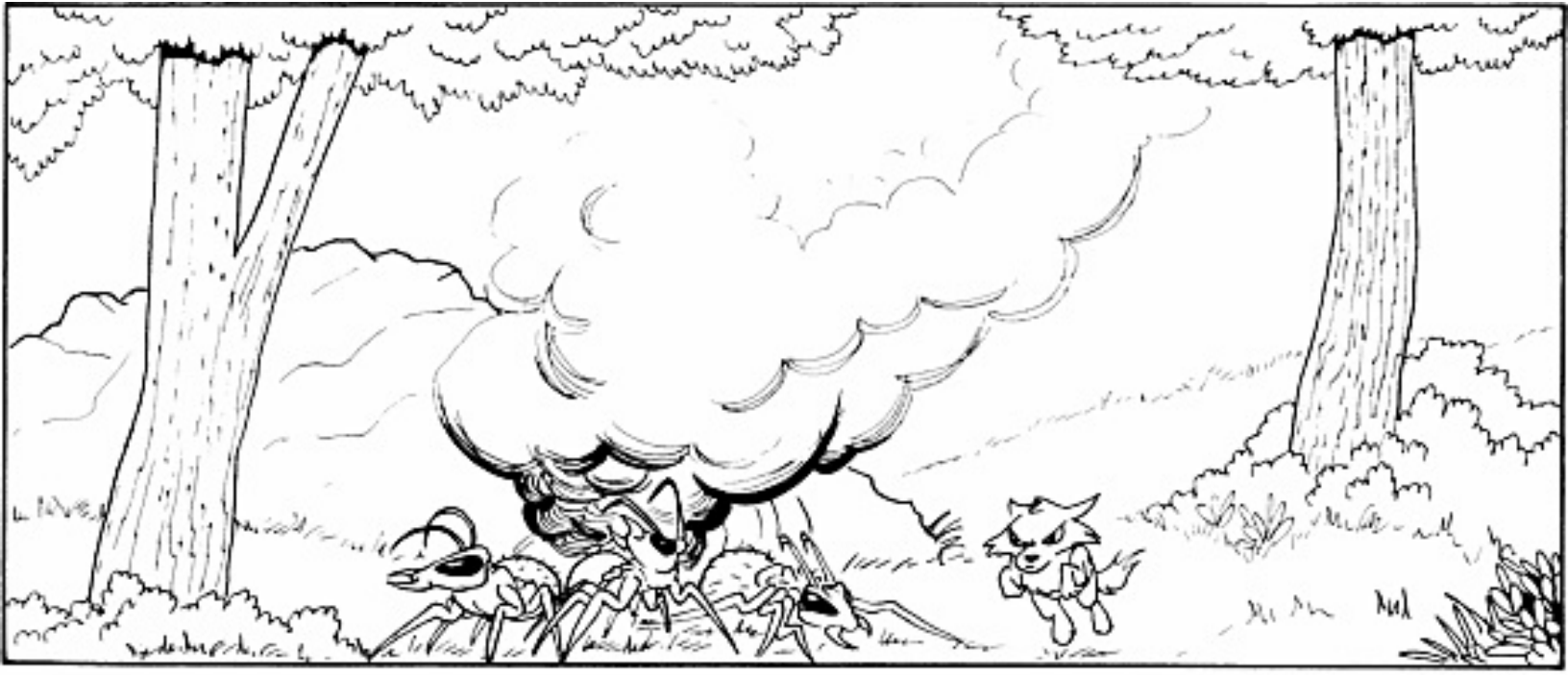
IT BE OKAY, YIP-YAPS. IT STILL MAKE ME JUMPY TO HAVE WINGTHING FLY AROUND, TOO.

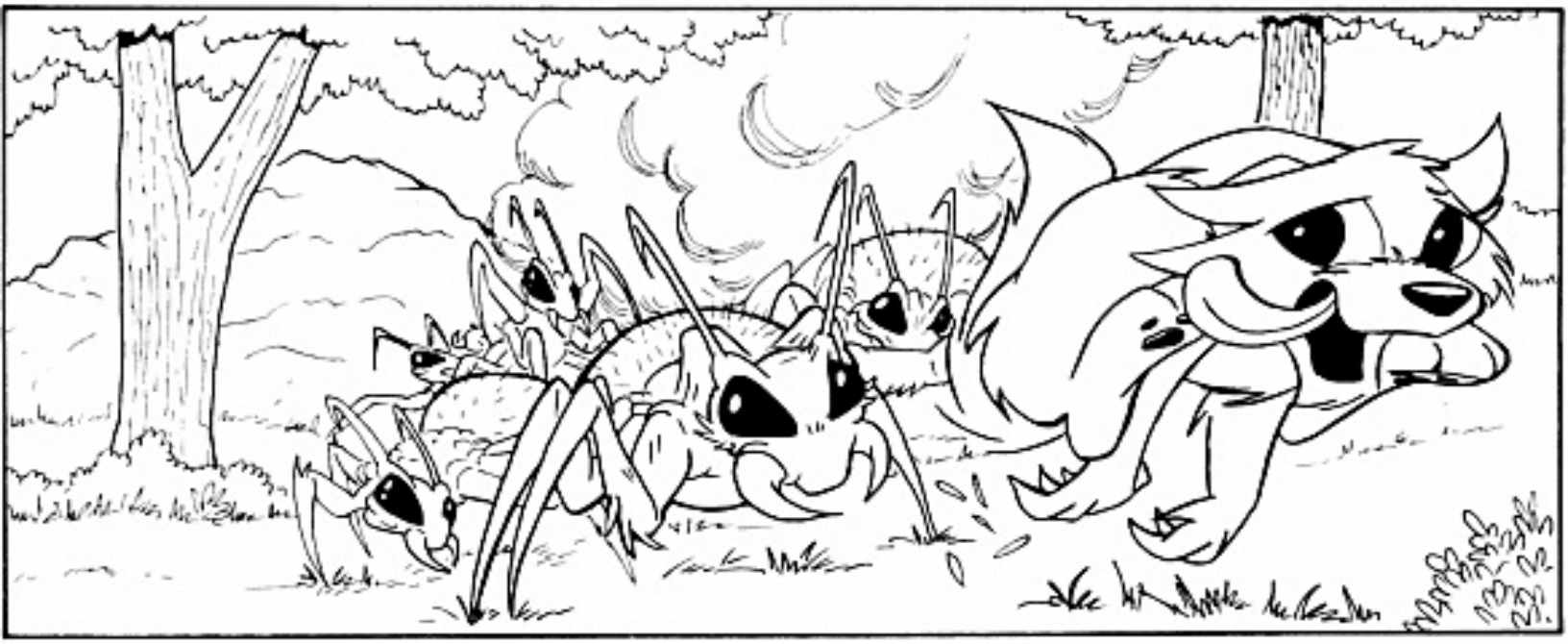
MORE FRIENDS OF YOURS?
YES.
THE HUNTERS HAVE LOCATED THE BURROWS.
BURROWS?
NO WONDER WE HAVEN'T SPOTTED MORE OF THEM.
WE HAVE BEGUN PICKING OFF ALL THE N'SEKZ SCOUTS THAT CAN BE FOUND.
THERE ARE MORE THAN ENOUGH TO FEED US, BUT I FEAR THAT OUR HUNTERS WILL NOT CATCH ENOUGH OF THEM TO CLEAR THEM FROM YOUR TERRITORY IN THE LOWLANDS.

THEN WE WILL NEED TO DO SOMETHING ELSE TO CONVINCE THE *CHIC'TR* TO MOVE ON FROM OUR TERRITORY.
GOT ANY BRIGHT IDEAS, PUP?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I DO.
QUICKPAW, WE WILL NEED YOUR HELP.
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, *QUICKPAW*? GO WITH HIM.

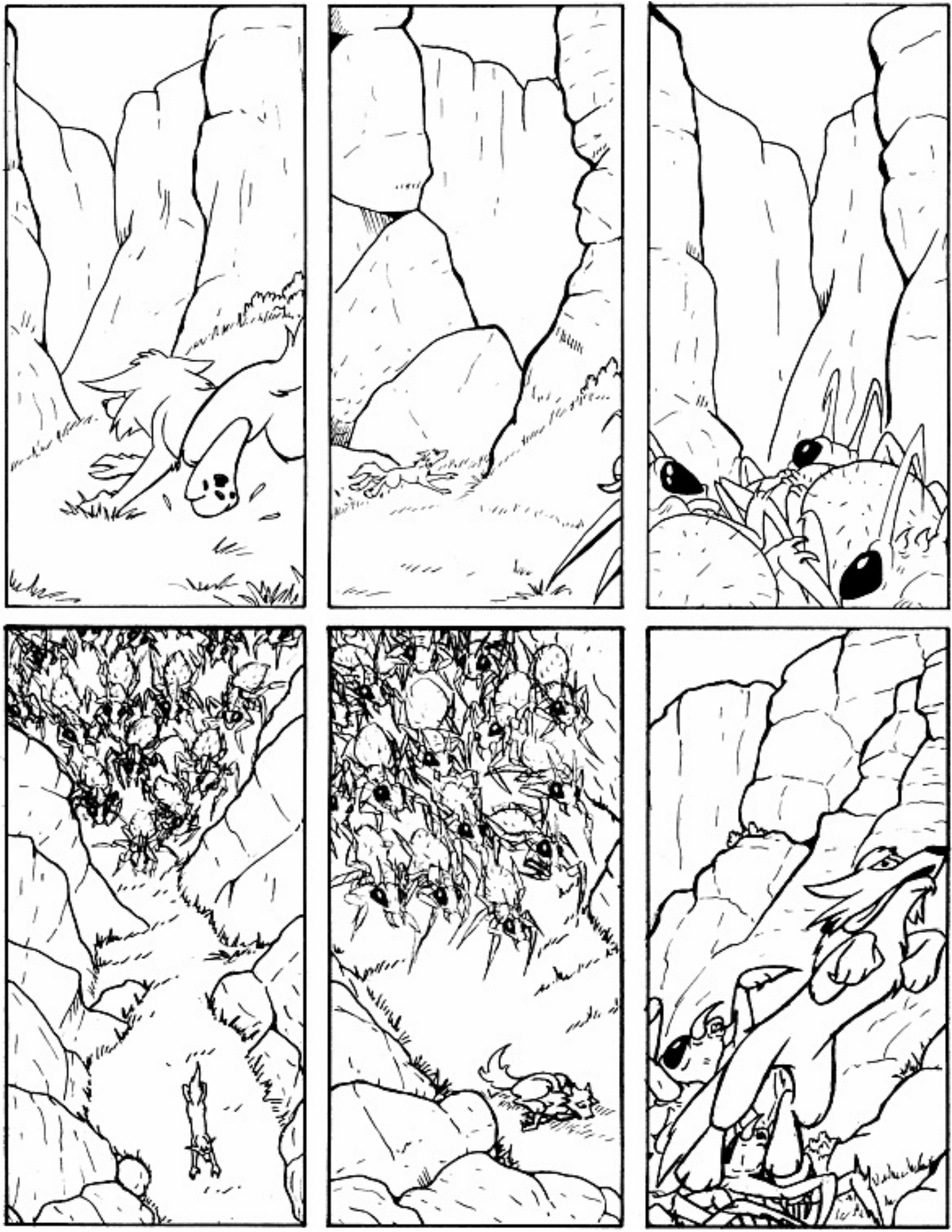
SHORTLY...
OKAY, QUICKPAW, YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO, RIGHT?
I SURE DO--RUN! DON'T WORRY, WHITEPAW. CHIC'TR MAY HAVE SIX LEGS TO OUR FOUR, BUT I CAN STILL OUTRUN THEM.
BE CAREFUL, QUICKPAW.
YOU PICKED THE RIGHT FENRAE FOR THIS.
THE OTHERS ARE IN PLACE. IT IS TIME.

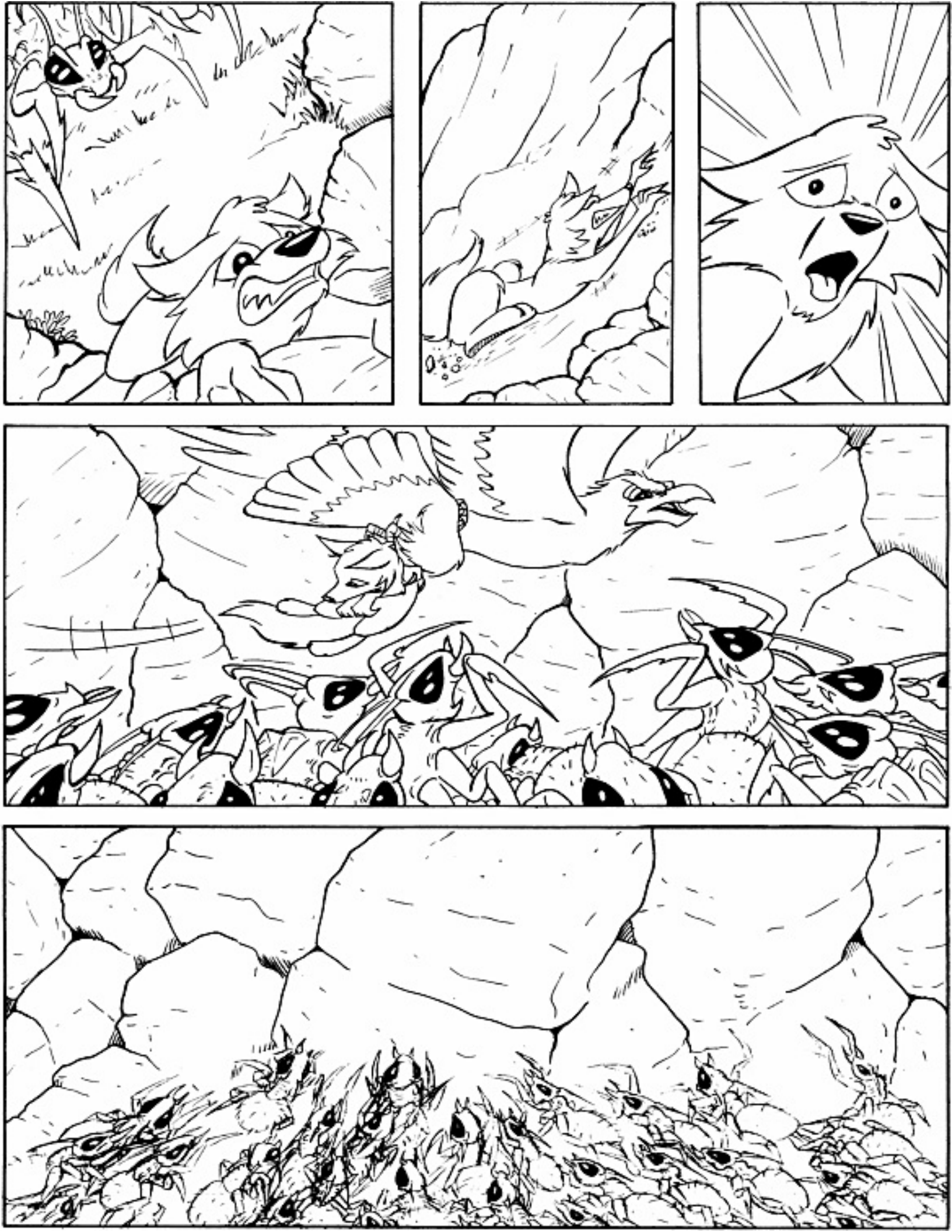

WAP
OKAY, QUICKPAW, GO!

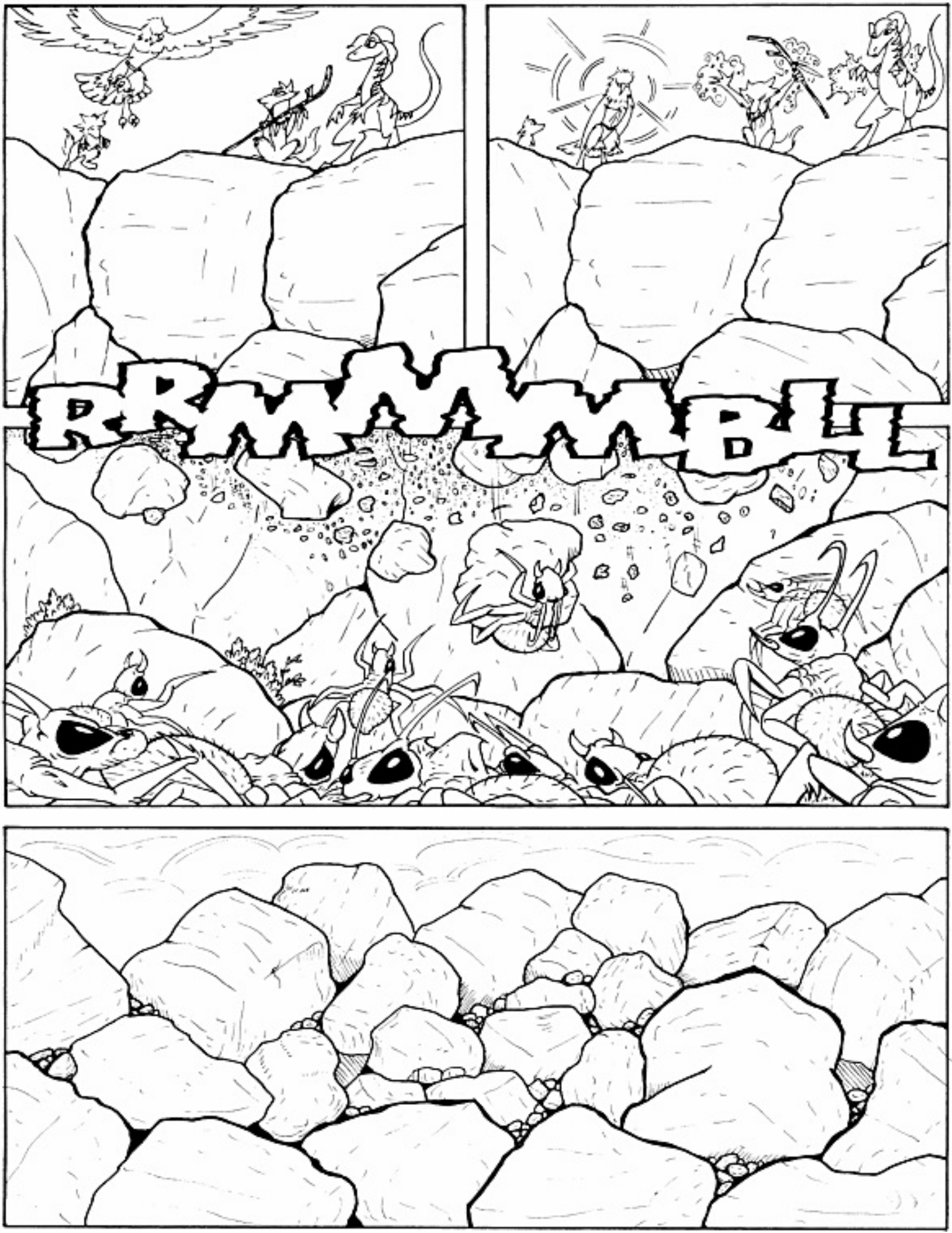




THAT YIP-YAP IS AS GOOD AS DEAD.
ME BET BELT POUCH FOR SPEAR THAT YIP-YAP SURVIVE.
YOU'RE ON!



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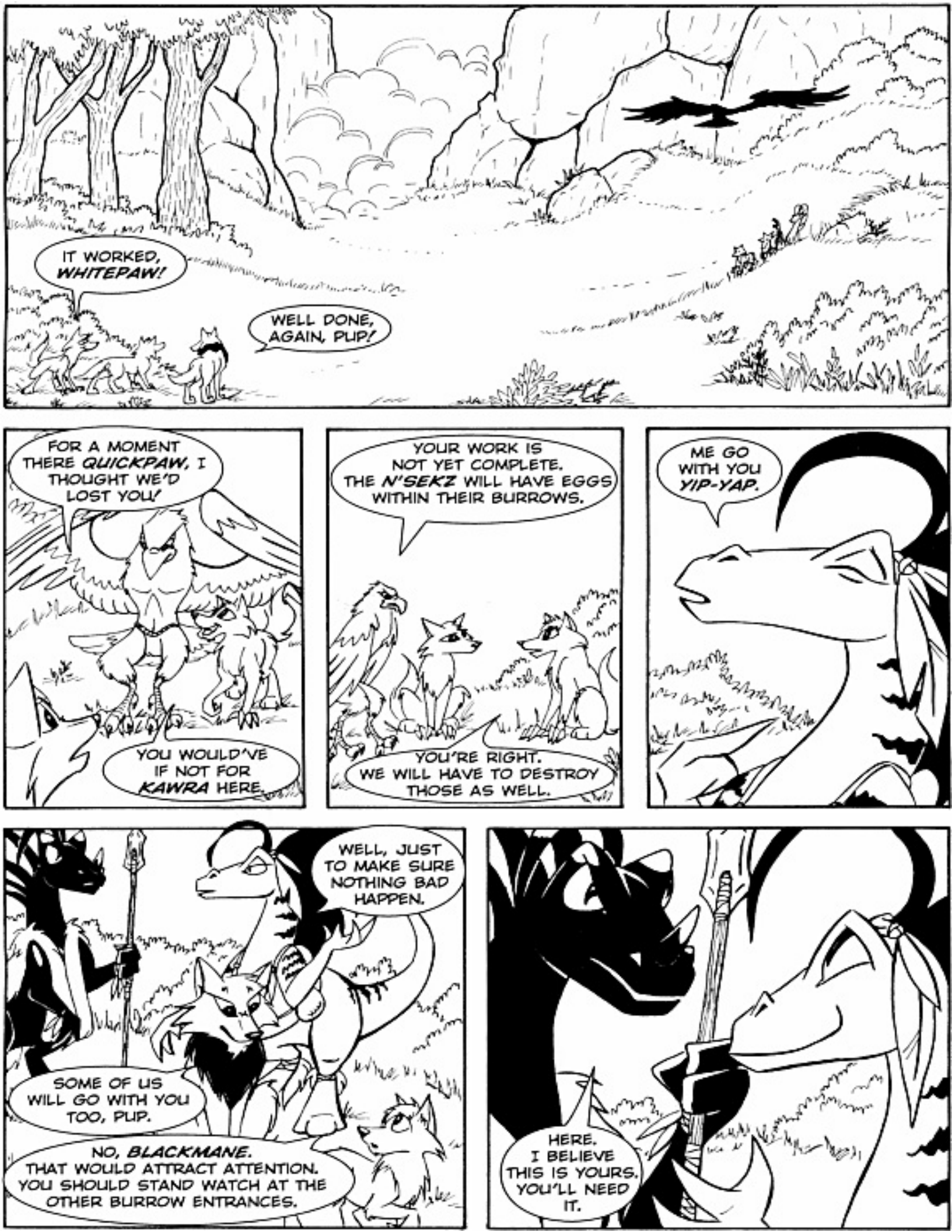
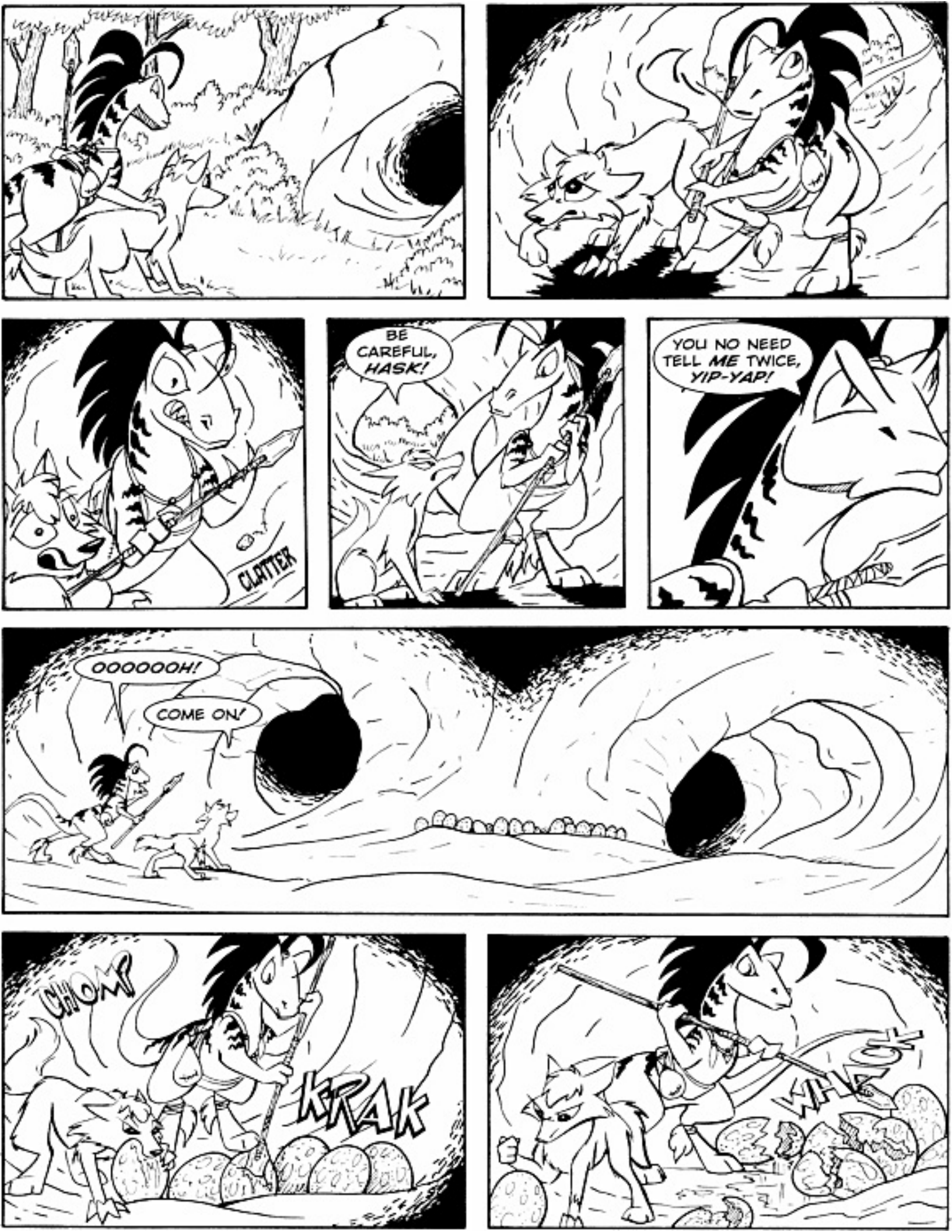
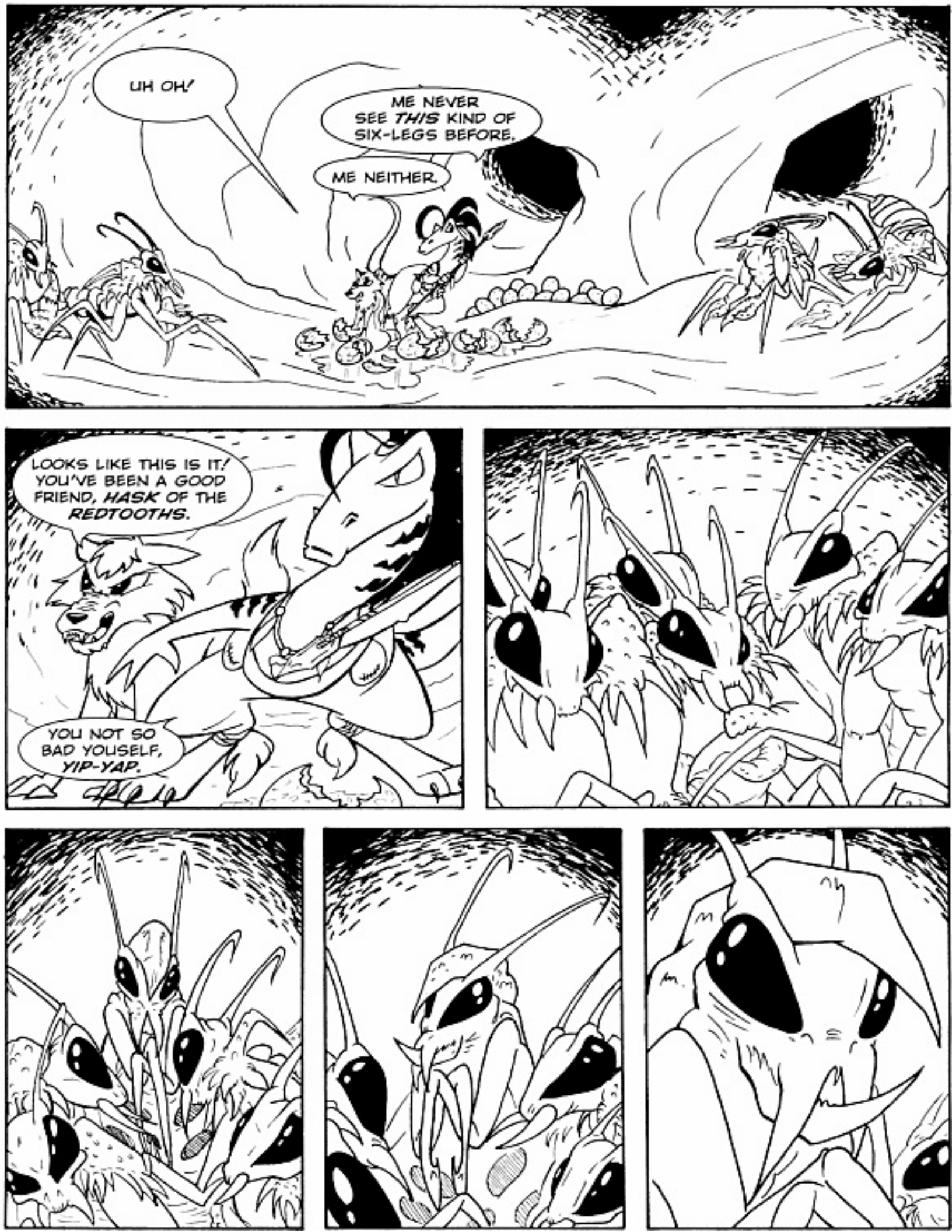
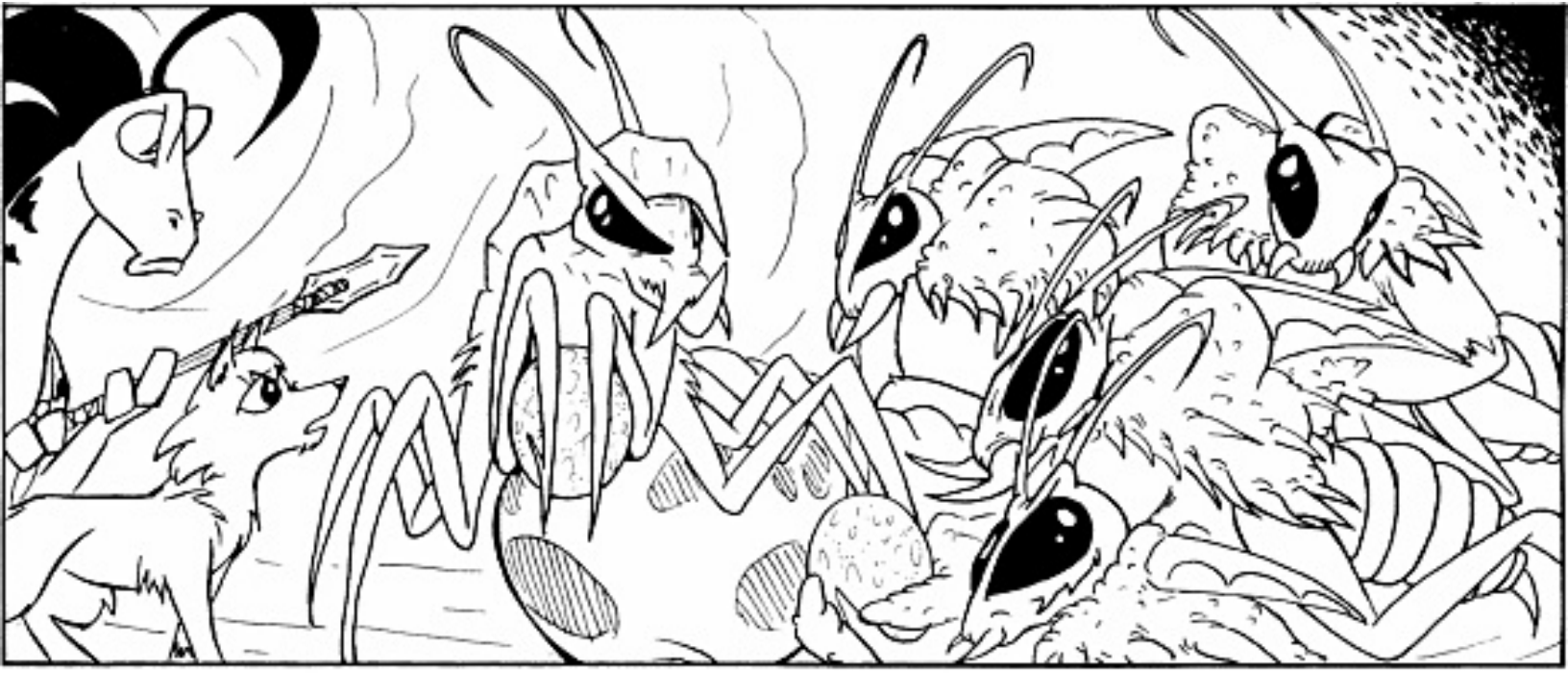
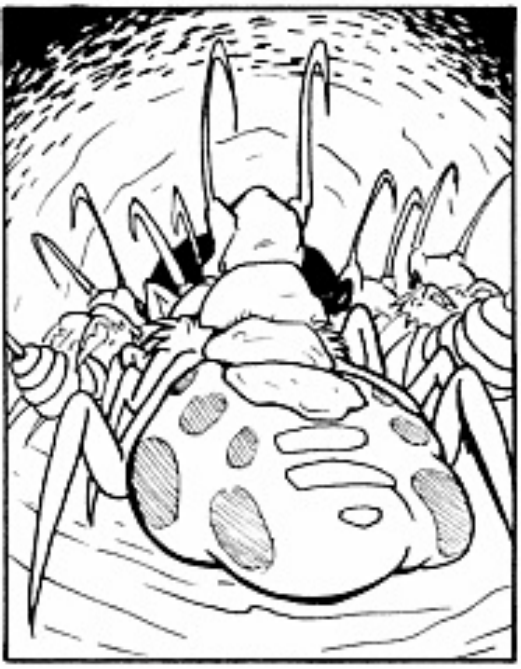

IT WORKED, WHITEPAW!
WELL DONE, AGAIN, PUP!
FOR A MOMENT THERE QUICKPAW, I THOUGHT WE'D LOST YOU!
YOU WOULD'VE IF NOT FOR KAWRA HERE.
YOUR WORK IS NOT YET COMPLETE. THE N'SEKZ WILL HAVE EGGS WITHIN THEIR BURROWS.
YOU'RE RIGHT. WE WILL HAVE TO DESTROY THOSE AS WELL.
ME GO WITH YOU YIP-YAP.
WELL, JUST TO MAKE SURE NOTHING BAD HAPPEN.
SOME OF US WILL GO WITH YOU TOO, PUP.
NO, BLACKMANE. THAT WOULD ATTRACT ATTENTION. YOU SHOULD STAND WATCH AT THE OTHER BURROW ENTRANCES.
HERE. I BELIEVE THIS IS YOURS. YOU'LL NEED IT.


CLATTER
BE CAREFUL, HASK!
YOU NO NEED TELL ME TWICE, YIP-YAP!
OOOOOOH!
COME ON!
CHOMP
KRAK
WHACK

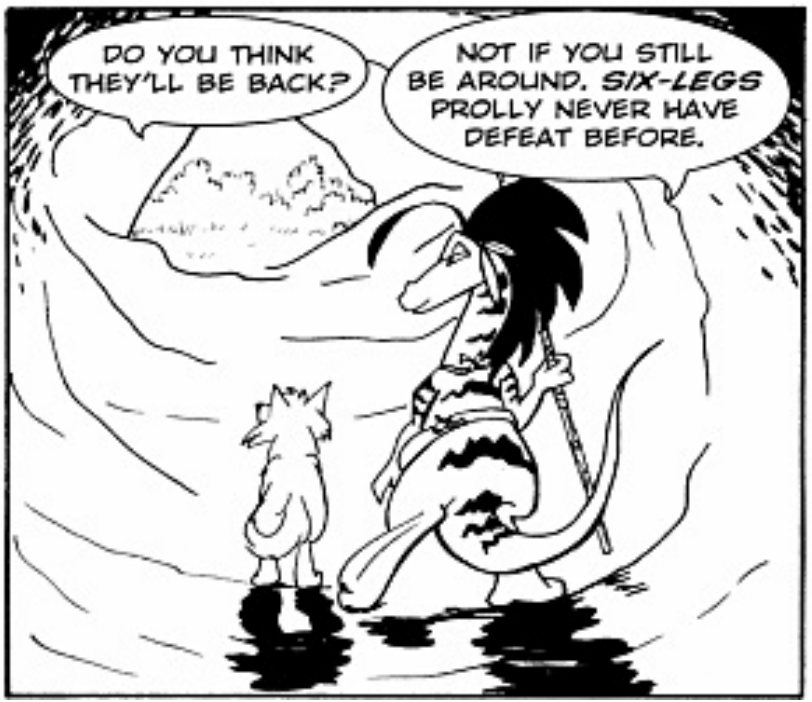

UH OH!
ME NEVER SEE *THIS* KIND OF SIX-LEGS BEFORE.
ME NEITHER.
LOOKS LIKE THIS IS IT! YOU'VE BEEN A GOOD FRIEND, *HASK* OF THE *REDTOOTHS*.
YOU NOT SO BAD YOUSELF, *YIP-YAP*.

HASK! THAT MUST BE THE CHIC'TR'S ALPHA!
THEN IT BE DEAD SOON, YIP-YAP!
NO! WAIT!
THIS IS OUR VALLEY! WE'VE HUNTED HERE LONG BEFORE YOU CAME AND WILL CONTINUE TO DEFEND OUR HOME AGAINST YOU UNTIL YOU HAVE NO MORE EGGS TO HATCH.





COME ON, YIP-YAP.


DO YOU THINK THEY'LL BE BACK?
NOT IF YOU STILL BE AROUND. SIX-LEGS PROLLY NEVER HAVE DEFEAT BEFORE.

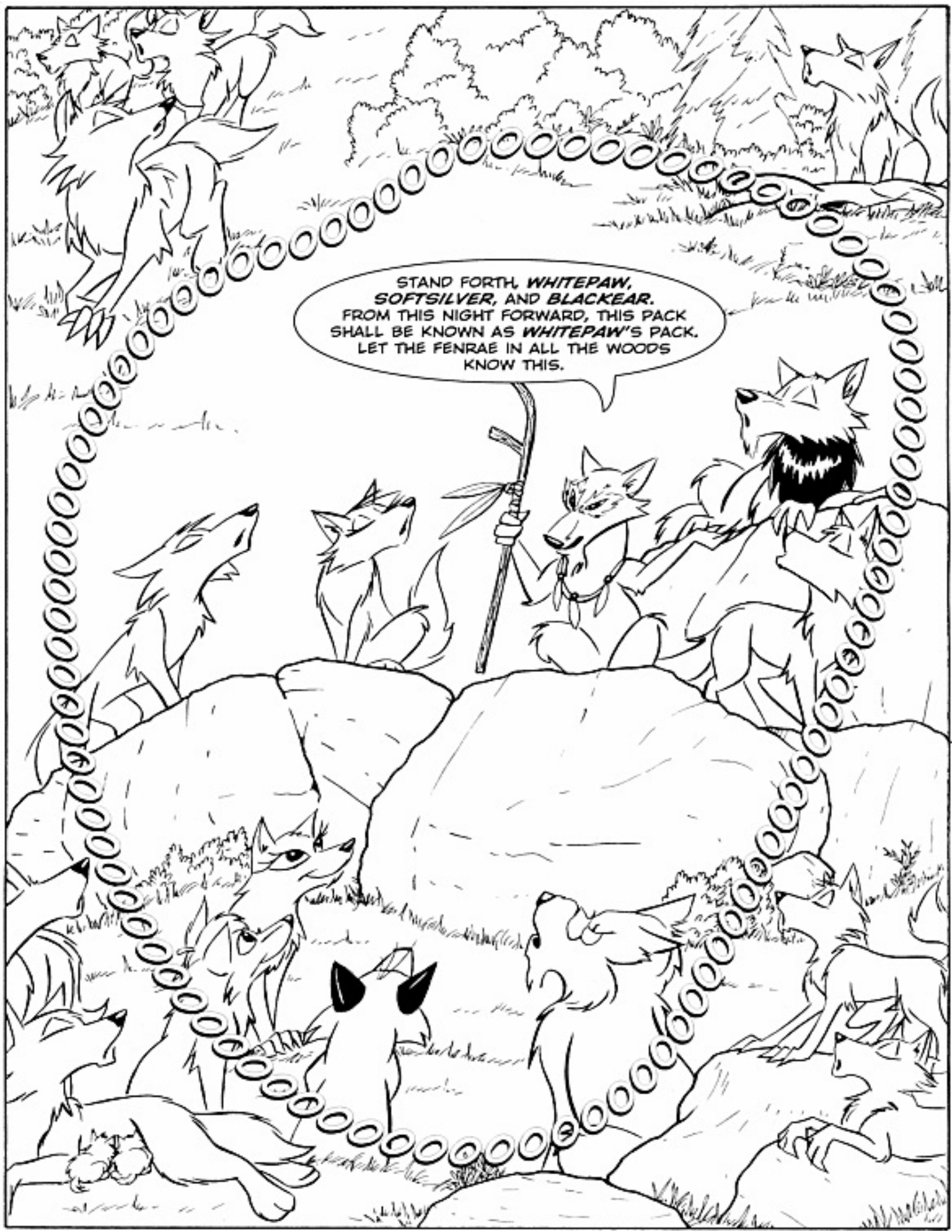
THEY WON'T TRAVEL FAR BUT EVEN IF THEY DO, OUR SCOUTS WILL KNOW WHERE THEY ARE.

YOU HAVE OUR THANKS, CUR'*WHITEPAW*. NOW WE MAY HAVE ENOUGH FOOD AGAIN.
THANKS FOR YOUR HELP TOO, *KAWRA*. WE COULDN'T HAVE SAVED *OUR* TERRITORY WITHOUT HELP FROM YOU AND THE OCKTONS.

I MUST RETURN TO MY PACK, BUT MAYBE WE WILL MEET AGAIN.
I WOULD BE HONORED CUR'*WHITEPAW*.

SO WHITEPAW, BLACKEAR AND SOFTSILVER RETURN TO BLACKMANE'S PACK WITH NEWS OF THE CHIC'TRS RETREAT.
YOU'VE DONE WELL PUP. DESPITE MY FIRST THOUGHTS ON YOUR IDEAS, I'M PROUD OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENT.
AYE, PUP! YOU'VE SURPRISED ME AS WELL.
I'M GLAD TO FINALLY BE BACK! I HAVE MISSED YOU ALL TERRIBLY.
EVEN SO, I'M AFRAID YOU CANNOT RETURN TO US NOW, WHITEPAW.
WHAT!?!
WHAT!?!

YOU HAVE YOUR OWN PACK TO LOOK AFTER NOW. BLACKMANE IS THE ALPHA OF THIS PACK. YOU KNOW THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE ALPHA.
THIS MAY BE SO, BUT HIS COMPANIONS DO NOT HAVE TO LEAVE. TELL US, BLACKEAR, SOFTSILVER, DO YOU WISH TO JOIN OUR PACK OR GO WITH WHITEPAW?
SINCE DEEPHOWL'S PACK WAS KILLED, WE HAVE TRAVELED WITH WHITEPAW AGAINST MY WISHES. BUT HE CARES DEEPLY FOR US AND HAS EVEN RISKED HIS LIFE TO SAVE MINE.
WHITEPAW IS A GOOD ALPHA. I'LL STAY WITH HIM, IF HE'LL HAVE ME AS HIS SECOND.
YOU BET!
I, TOO, WISH TO STAY WITH WHITEPAW.
I SEE YOU HAVE BECOME A RESPECTED LEADER, PUP. YOU TRULY HAVE DONE WELL FOR YOURSELF AS WELL AS FOR THE REST OF US.
FROST, TELL THE OTHERS.


STAND FORTH, ***WHITEPAW***, ***SOFTSILVER***, AND ***BLACKEAR***. FROM THIS NIGHT FORWARD, THIS PACK SHALL BE KNOWN AS ***WHITEPAW***'S PACK. LET THE FENRAE IN ALL THE WOODS KNOW THIS.

ARE YOU GOING BACK TO H'SAK? I MUST RETURN TO K'LAR SINCE IT IS NEAR THE TIME FOR MY EGG.
YEH! WE NEED LET MYSTICS KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.
•SNIFF• WE PROLLY NEVER SEE YIP-YAPS AGAIN.
DON'T BE TOO SURE.
RUSTLE RUSTLE
YIP-YAP! ME THINK YOU GO BACK TO OTHERS.
WE'RE LOOKING FOR OUR OWN TERRITORY NOW.
IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE ON OUR OWN, HASK. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE TO HELP US.
I DON'T THINK IT WOULD HAVE WORKED OUT TO STAY THERE.

I'M GOING TO MISS YOU-- ALL OF YOU.
MAY RAKKOR WATCH OVER YOU, YIP-YAP.
I HOPE YOU MANAGE TO KEEP YOUR PELTS, YIP-YAPS.
TAKE CARE, HASK.
THESE FEATHERS BE VERY POWERFUL TALISMAN.
THEY PROTECT YOU SINCE ME NOT BE 'ROUND TO DO IT.
SO, ARE YOU OFF ON ANOTHER VERY SERIOUS MISSION?
MEBBE, BUT NOW YOU ON MOST SERIOUS MISSION OF ALL, YIP-YAP.
WHAT'S THAT?
YOU BE ON START OF NEW LIFE.

...AND SO YOU SEE, ARGENT, WHITEPAW SECURED A SAFE PLACE ON ERNOR NOT ONLY JUST FOR HIS PACK, BUT FOR ALL OF THE FENRAE.
IT IS SAD, HONORED NAOMH BODACH, THAT THEIR PEOPLE NOW ARE SO OPRESSED. FOLLOWING THE TURNING, WHEN THEY LOST SO MUCH OF THEIR SHAMAN MAGIC, THEY STILL MANAGED TO SURVIVE BY ADAPTING MUCH THE SAME WAY AS WE DID.
AND NOW YOU TELL ME THAT THERE IS A FENRAE WHO IS ONE OF THE COMPANIOINS AMONG YOU?
YES, AND I FEAR IT WILL NOT SIT WELL WITH ANY OF THE HUMANS SHE MAY HAVE DEALINGS WITH.
WHICH REMINDS ME OF A STORY FROM LONG AGO. THERE WAS A GREAT DISTURBANCE IN THE VILLAGE OF SEL, DEEP WITHIN THE LUSHGREEN FOREST. AN EGG HAD BEEN LAID WITHIN THE VILLAGE CLUTCH MOUND THAT WAS LIKE NONE OTHER SEEN BEFORE...

Yip-Yaps

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Dear Patrick and Vicky,

I'm writing to congratulate the two of you on producing a book as incredible as *Ernor*. Your work truly stands out, and I have found *Ernor* to be truly enjoyable!

To be honest, I have been horrendously behind in my leisure reading for the past six months due to an unusually heavy academic workload, and I was not able to even begin reading the *Ernor* series until recently. I believe it's a testament to how enthralling the book is when I say that, even though I initially only planned to read the first issue in the time I had set aside, I read all of issues one through five in the same sitting!

Having said that, it may seem redundant when I claim that your story and the world of Ernor truly draw the reader in. Whitepaw, Hask, Flashdust and the others are all very believable characters with interesting group dynamics, which is the primary reason I enjoy the book so much. It is very easy to relate to them all, and that, of course, makes the story that much more meaningful and gripping.

Like many others, I am eagerly awaiting the final issue of this series (which I will hopefully read in a more timely manner than the first five!

I wish good luck to the two of you, and offer my sincere appreciation of your hard work on Ernor.

Best regards,
Matt Penna

Thanks Matt! We're glad so many find our characters and setting engaging and entertaining. It has been a fun trip and as you can see from the last page of this issue, there are many more stories to come.

Dear Vicky and Patrick,

First, thank you for printing another of my letters in *Ernor's* Yip-Yaps section. I'm flattered that you think they're worth space in such a good comic. I hope my occasional letters don't trouble you.

Is there a chance you may do an issue devoted to the art of Ernor? Either color, or black and white? It would be neat to see full pages of sketches, cover art, and concept art. (Speaking of which, the 1995 concept art of Rakkor and Gra'ak looks neat! Is it me, or do they look almost dragon-like? Hey, cool with me. I'm a "scales and tails" fan, so I'm easy to please.) All your art is excellent!

So the Mi'kar are "little flamethrowers" huh? I never saw that coming! That could lead to some interesting storylines in the future. I look to the future, for Ernor #5, on the inside cover, you welcomed David Hopkins for the conclusion of your first series. I sincerely hope this means there's more Ernor to come after issue #6! If you ever get to the point where you can handle subscriptions directly, count me in! Ernor would be the only comic I'd order directly from the publisher, instead of through *Previews* (Diamond Comics). Oh, by the way, hi there Mr. Hopkins, and welcome to *Ernor*.

There was mention of a story on Hask's dialect and such, and you were hoping some publisher would make it into an anthology. Put a note in *Ernor* somewhere if it happens so your fans know where to look. United Publications' *Wild Side* again, maybe?

Well, keep up the good work, and making the characters more than what meets the eye on the surface, like with Flashdust and the Araku (wingthings). (I like eagles, hawks, and gryphons, as well as dragons, dinos, and such.) I wish *Ernor* a long, successful run! Hey, if the "big, superhero" comics can do it with "Seinfeld" stories, as you called them, that seem to continue forever with no definite end, and color, you should be able to with loyal readers wanting good art and storylines. I wish getting to a convention wasn't nearly impossible for me, or I'd surely come to meet you. Someday, perhaps. Until then, please take care. "Rakkor watches over you", right? I wish you much success.

I didn't think that I was a "furry fan" until I realized that starting way back with ol' Sesame Street and the Saturday cartoons, old Disney character comics, and all the Disney movies (with generous doses of action, adventure, horror, and sci-fi), most of what I've read and watched has had talking animals for characters. (Just none of those with the "furry females", but hey, to each their own, I say.) Even Ironcat's *Dragon Wars* series had walking, talking dragons in it. But regardless of if I can be categorized as an "anthorpomorphic fan" or not, please know your *Ernor* project has my total support. I'm glad I got in on the ground floor, and that you're receptive to your fans and their letters. You're not just comic publishers, you're friends from a few hundred miles away. And I mean it.

Sincerely, your fan,
Stacey Van Gronigen

We are happy to oblige, thanks for the support. From the onset of this publication I promised I'd print any negative feedback as well as the good stuff to provide a balance. As you can see, the support has been overwhelming.

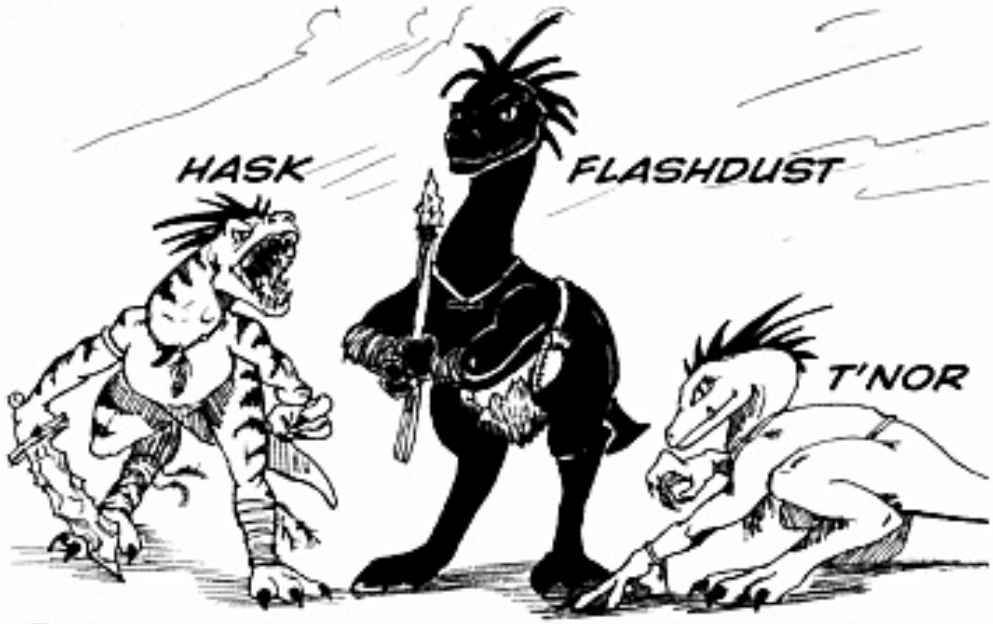
All of the folks who have embraced our story and our characters have our gratitude. We will continue to tell Ernor stories as long as we can. The setting is rich and the characters have depth and purpose.

As for the future,* Ernor: Destiny of Rai *is in preproduction. We haven't decided in what type of format we will run that story yet, but there is a very good possibiltiy it will come out as a complete graphic novel, all in one book. One story, no waiting.

The timeline of Ernor will march on and new stories are forthcoming as are, hopefully, new readers. May Rakkor watch over you all, until then.

Ernor Gallery

This is one of Vicky's early concept sketches of Whitepaw from the 70s. He was one of a small troupe of characters she was developing for future publication. The ockton however, was drawn by Pat in the 5th grade. When Vicky began drafting the story, she wanted it to involve non-humans, much the same way *The Lion King* was done. She also wanted the threat to be large insect creatures, but otherwise was having a difficult time developing the setting. Pat wrote a two-page story where Whitepaw met Hask and it began rolling.



Ernor was a setting that Pat had developed back in 1995 for a role-playing game and it seemed the perfect setting for Whitepaw's adventure. The two kicked around the idea of doing an ockton comic with those characters but only finished a few pages. It wasn't until early '99 did things sort out enough to really go into production on the story.

OTHER TIMES, AN INSTANT IS ALL YOU HAVE FOR A SNACK...
UNTIL YOU RETURN TO MORE MUNDANE TASKS.
ME HASK. ME COME TO TRADE POTTERY FROM DRAK.
CLUNK
THAT'S NOT GOOD POTTERY. IT'S ALL CRACKED AND BROKEN!
WELL, MAYBE IT GOOD TRADE AFTER ALL.

These early panles didn't have the polished "animation" look that we were after. Hask's personality was evident, though, even then, because we had traveled with her on several adventures and already knew how she reacted in all types of situations. Much of the material for Ernor spans several thousand years. We started during the First Age which encompasses this and the next two stories pertaining to Whitepaw and Hask. There are three more Ages that occur after what we affectionately call The Turning, the last Age being a Renaissance period of great adventure, swashbuckling and magic. We have already drafted an entire novel detailing the adventures of a fenrae from this period and have begun tying the various Ages together. We are very happy to have been able to share this first glimpse into the world of Ernor that will provide stories for, literally, Ages to come.

The Covers

Vicky usually would do a few thumbnail sketches of the cover and we would decide on which one looked best. She would then draw the characters and ink them. I(Pat) would start off by scanning the image into Photoshop and use the line art like an animation cel which allows you paint on layers below without disturbing the integrity of the original art.

This is actually the coolest thing since sliced bread, and since you're painting areas "underneath" the black outlines there's no grayed area that can be caused when using the Magic Wand tool or the Paint Bucket.

Most of the background textures along with the Ernor title were rendered in a 3D program and then dropped into the final image.

At this stage I would paint the highlights and shadows using a variety of tools and filters in Photoshop, generally working on one character at time until it was finished before moving on to the next one.

This process is repeated for every object in the picture, whether it's a feather, spear shaft or a character's eye. Sometimes, depending on the complexity of the image, there would be several layers of shadows and highlights to achieve the desired effect but the procedure generally remains the same. After everything was colored, the brightness is adjusted for output, I would save the file in several formats for various uses,

The Book

As with any production it all begins with the story. In the case of Ernor #6, Vicky and I(Pat) worked out all the storyline and plotting in advance and wrote a simple script to indicate dialogue and descriptions as a guideline.

Once the script is completed we usually work out a "thumbnail" of each page as it will appear. I just fold about eight sheets of printer paper at the middle and staple them like a comic book. This forms a "mini-comic" and we then sketch directly on those pages following the script. This allows us to see how the story will progress from one page to the next and also show the pace of the action over the course of the issue.

Vicky will then start penciling the pages. She draws all of the characters in pencil first and then turns the pages over to me to pencil in the backgrounds.

Once those are completed she then inks all the characters using an assortment of technical pens and brushes depending on the scene. When the characters are complete, she passes the boards to me once again and I ink all the backgrounds. It takes 3-4 weeks to pencil and completely finish inking the pages so they are ready for scanning.

Each issue of *Ernor* is then lettered in Adobe Illustrator using ComiCraft's Wild and Crazy font. After this the book is assembled using QuarkXpress and a CD is burnt to ship off to the printer.

The ockton culture has been heavily developed to give us a good grasp of how they think and interact. Even though in this first story, only a small glimpse of it is revealed, much of it will be used for *Ernor: Destiny of Rai.*

There are five different clans of ocktons each led by a chief or chieftess. Each clan has a particular function that they are noted for and are interdependent of one another for the goods they produce or services they perform. The Redtooths are adept at pottery, the Blacksoots are fierce warriors and hunters, etc. All trade is by the barter system and value is dependant on the perception of said items.

Ocktons are distinguished by their color. Females are warm colored, reds, yellows, browns, while male ocktons ore cool colored, blues, greens and blacks.

Since the fenrae are particularly wolf-like there was a lot of material to draw on in the way of wolf behavior and pack life. In later Ages we will see that this social structure will put them in direct competition with some of the other sentient races of Ernor.

The ocktons, on the other hand, will be all together different.

We're not sure exactly how it started but I think it had something to do with a discussion about sexy furry characters.

Shon Howell brought up the subject at the Mephit Furmeet '99 and we got rolling on a long series of hilarious sketches involving Hask and coconuts.

As of this writing there are no plans for an *Ermor Swimsuit Special* even though we've kicked around the idea of doing a shared world anthology as an annual.

Maybe if we pester Shon enough and send him a big load of coconuts he'll do a story for us.

WILD WEST HASK
I'D ADVISE YOU TO UNMOOSE PARTNER... WE DON'T COTTON TO YIP-YAPS IN THESE HERE PARTS... NOW TAKE HER COCONUTS & GIT!!
SHON 2K

Midwest FurFest

Sheraton Arlington Park, Arlington Heights, IL November 17-19, 2000

Guests of Honor

Robert & Margaret Carspecken

Derrick Dasenbrock Rapid T. Rabbit

For six years, Chicago's Duckon has been proud to host a strong, vibrant furry programming track. Duckon's Furry Track has grown considerably over the past several yaers, and we've had a fun time organizing it.There comes a time for change, though, and this is it. It's time we moved on...

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For additional information, Mail to:
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